

REMARKS

Claims 4-6, 8, 23, 24, 28, 29, 33, 36-40, 42-63, 65-75, 77-84, 87-92, and 131-133 are pending in the application of which claims 4-6, 8, 23, 24, 28, 33, 36-40, 42-51, 53, 54, 56-59, 61-63, 65, 66, 68-71, 73-75, 83, 84, 87, 89-92 and 131-133 have been rejected. Claim 84 has been objected to. Claims 29, 52, 55, 60, 67, 72, 77-82 and 88 have been allowed. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) and objection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

Claims 4, 23, 28, 32, 39, 47, 49, 53, 65, 83 and 87 are amended to highlight that the support member aids in the placement of the couplers on the recipient.

Claim 84 was not amended due to the amendments to the claims mentioned above.

Applicants acknowledge allowed claims 29, 52, 55, 60, 67, 72, 77-82 and 88.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 4-6, 8, 13, 23, 24, 28, 32, 33, 36, 38-40, 42-44, 47, 49, 53, 54, 58, 61-63, 65, 66, 70, 83, 87, 89, 91, 92 and 131-133 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Varelis et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,033,474). Claims 37, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, 56, 57, 59, 68, 69, 71, 73-75, 83 and 90 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Varelis et al. (previous cite). The aforementioned §§102 and 103 rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has admitted (in the Action, Page 4, paragraph 1) that Varelis et al. does not disclose or suggest the teaching that the support member aids in the placement of the couplers on the recipient. As stated in the Remarks section above, claims 4, 23, 28, 32, 39, 47, 49, 53, 65, 83 and 87 were amended to highlight that feature which was originally disclosed in the specification. No new matter was added.

As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Varelis et al. under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103. Hence, the present claims are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

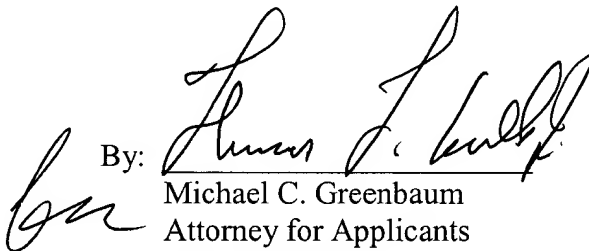
Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment and the aforementioned remarks obviate the outstanding rejection(s) in this case, thereby placing the Application in condition for immediate allowance. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (000309-00212).

In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this response, Applicant hereby petitions under 37 CFR 1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully Submitted,

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